DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 882 LI 004 417

AUTHOR Kaungamno, Ezekiel E.
TITLE School Libraries as a Basic Tool for Teaching.
INSTITUTION Tanganyika Library Service (Tanzania).
PUB DATE Jul 73
NOTE 10p.;(3 References)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Bookmobiles; Foreign Countries; *Library Services; *School Libraries; Secondary Schools; Teaching
IDENTIFIERS Library Role; *Tanzania

ABSTRACT

A school library service committee as an arm of the Tanganyika Library Service was established to improve school libraries to enable them to become a useful basic tool for teaching. The committee was faced from the beginning with the problem of how to develop school libraries with inadequate funds and insufficient manpower. The approach taken was to provide reasonably adequate library service in a few schools at first, and then expand the program to other schools. This would allow for efficient service in the selected area and would provide a model of what could be accomplished in other areas in the future. UNESCO assistance helped establish model school libraries in three regions, including a mobile school library service. Although the program is designed for all school libraries, scarce resources have limited the improvement efforts to secondary schools. (SJ)

ED 078882

SCHOOL LIBRARIES AS A BASIC TOOL FOR TEACHING

By Ezekiel E. Kaungamno, B.A. M.L.S., Director
Tanganyika Library Service.

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRE
SENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

LI 004 417

Paper delivered to the International Association of School Librarianship Conference, Nairobi, 29th - 31st July 1973

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

SCHOOL LIBRARIES AS A BASIC TOOL FOR TEACHING. THE TANZANIA'S CASE.

By Ezekiel E. Kaungamno, B.A, M.L.S. Director, Tanganyika Library Service

Since independence (in 1961) Tanzania has been keen to provide adequate school libraries and to improve the standard of education in primary and secondary schools.

In 1962 the Tanganyika Government (as it was then called) and the Government of the United States entered into agreement to undertake a project for the expansion and improvement of "the teacher, training process... at the secondary school level."[1] Kent State University was commissioned as the contractor of the Project. The Tanzania - Kent State University Project built the Dar es Salaam Teachers College and one of the major aims of the Project was to improve school libraries through the training of teacher librarians and library assistants.

In the field of library science the Dar es Salaam Teachers College was responsible for

(a) the advice and coordination of a network of library services to teachers colleges.

(b) the training of library assistants who would staff teachers college libraries

(c) offering orientation courses to all primary school teachers and

(d) the training of teacher librarians.

All these activities are documented in detail in my previous paper entitled Library Services to teachers and others by Education Libraries in Tanzania (presented at the Fourth East African Library Association Conference, Makerere University, Kampala, 16 - 19 September, 1970) which was publi-

.....2/...

shed in the East African Library Association Bulletin No.13 of July, 1972.

The Tanzania - Kent State University Project came to an end in 1966 and while the Project appeared to be successful from 1962 to 1966, its influence waned, for lack of funds and manpower after the experts left. So much for the Tanzania - Kent University Project.

The establishment of a school library service as an arm of Tanganyika Library Service was envisaged by Mr. S.W. Hockey who, in 1960, prepared a report on the development of library services in East Africa. Mr. Hockey's recommendations were accepted by the Tanganyika Government (as it was then called) in 1961 and in 1963 the National Assembly approved the establishment of the Tanganyika Library Services Board to coordinate and develop libraries in Tanganyika.

The establishment of a school library service as an arm of the Tanganyika Library Service was important for the following factors:

(1) The need to coordinate school libraries with the development of Teacher Training College Libraries.

(2) The necessity of coordinating school libraries with the development of a public library service for children planned by the Tanganyika Library Services Board.

(3) The inadequacy of the present school libraries arising out of the lack of books and the poor unco-ordinated organization.

(4) The uncritical acceptance of gifts of books and the need to train teachers in the basic principles of the selection of books for school libraries.

(5) The absolute necessity of widening the horizons of students and teachers beyond the confines of set books and school text books.

In order to advise the Board on the development of school libraries, a School Library Service Committee was created. In order to ensure that the development of this service is coordinated with the development of national education, the membership of the Committee includes officials of the Ministry of National Education.

From the time a school library service was established as an arm of the Tanganyika Library Service the Board was faced with the problem of how to go about developing school libraries with inadequate funds and insufficient manpower at its disposal. The choice was whether to give limited aid to every school in Tanganyika or to provide a reasonably adequate service to a limited area, gradually expanding this as resources permit and as administrative means become available. It was obvious that to help, all schools at the same time has a fine democratic flavour but that this approach is unrealistic in that expansion would only be temporary and school libraries would inevitably deteriorate for lack of funds and manpower.

It was therefore suggested that a reasonably adequate library service should be given to a few schools at a time and more schools should be included in the programme when it became practricable to do so. A limited service provi-

ded to a few schools to start with would not only result in an efficient service for the selected area, but would act as a demonstration of what can be done.

Following a request by the Tanzanian Government for UNESCO assistance with the development of school libraries in Tanzania which was presented in 1964, UNESCO agreed to provide an expert in school library work. The expert arrived in Tanzania in June, 1968 with the following terms of reference:[2]

(1) To establish in selected schools within the region model school libraries which can serve as sources for demonstration for teachers throughout the country.

(2) To provide advice and assistance to teachers in the selection of books and the operation of school libraries.

The established model school libraries were to serve teachers and students as a demonstration of:

(1) Well selected library materials to support the school curriculum and contribute to the recreational, social and cultural needs of the pupils.

(2) Use of the library as an integral part of the school programme by provision of regular library periods in which pupils are introduced to the materials available in various subject areas and how to use the, and are given sufficient knowledge of library organization to make the most effective use of its contents.

(3) Contribution to the total development of pupils by encouraging self-reliant study habits and the reading and use of books to develop social and cultural interests which will enable them to become productive members of their society.

(4) Purpose built libraries designed to house stock adequately with rooms for class and seminar groups, space for private study and facilities for effective display and exhibitions.

(5) Simply designed furniture and equipment which can be obtained or fairly easily copied locally.

(6) Good library organization which will ensure the most effective use of library resources.

To start with three regions were selected and a model school library was established in each of them. In order to reinforce the bookstock of school libraries in the area, there is also a school mobile library service. Two or three times a year the books are delivered by a mobile library which allows teachers and students to select books for their libraries. The books are exchanged from time to time. The school mobile library service has now been extended to a fourth region. Eventually it is planned to establish a model school library in each of the 20 regions which hopefully will also be served by school mobile vehicles.

To help bring the school libraries to the required standard:

(a) recommended books for secondary schools appear in booklists which are prepared by the National Central Library. The booklists are circulated as buying guides or book selection aids to schools at three monthly intervals.

(b) a list of recommended periodicals for secondary school libraries has been prepared,

(c) a manual for school libraries has been compiled to guide teacher librarians in the organization of their libraries.

(d) the National Central Library is presently pre-occupied with the preparation of standards for school libraries and a comprehensive basic list of books in every subject.

(e) there are courses and seminars for teacher/librarians,

(f) working drawings of basic equipment have been prepared and these are available to schools on request, and

(g) the Tanganyika Library Service cooperates with the Ministry of National Education in the design of school libraries especially joint public/school libraries which can be used by students and adults.

Though it had been planned since 1966 that there should be a centralized book ordering, classification and cataloguing

...../7/..

for schools, this has not been possible because of scarce resources.

The question of staffing school libraries has been a perennial problem. Since July, 1972 a National Certificate Course for Library Assistants was started in order to meet the big demand for Library Assistants in schools, teachers colleges and other institutions. The course is of the same status as that of East African School of Librarianship, Makerere University - that is, entry qualification, duration, syllabus and remuneration are the same except, of course, it is geared to meet the needs of Tanzania:

Let us now look at the problems facing school libraries. The role of a library as a basic tool for teaching is influenced by many factors, some of which are:

(a) Administrators a authorities - whether their attitude is favourable or unfavourable to libraries.

(b) Curriculum - i.e. - does it encourage broad reading or is formal instruction based on textbooks only?

(c) teachers - do they encourage students to read widely or do they expect them to read textbooks only?

(d) library staff - are they qualified or unqualified?

(e) money - is the library given adequate funds?

(f) building - whether this is purpose built or not.

A research on school libraries in Tanzania by an expert from UNESCO[3] showed among other things that

(a) in secondary schools, headmasters receive a per capita grant to cover all expenditure and that the amount of this spent on the library is at the discretion of the headmaster, and dependent, to a large extent, on other financial exigencies.

(b) primary schools receive no specific grant for school libraries and are dependent on donations or on raising money locally

(c) in terms of numbers, the stock position in secondary schools is unsatisfactory, in terms of quality the books are out of date.

There is an uncritical acceptance of gifts of books most of which are irrelevant to the needs of Tanzanians. A good example of this was a book entitled, How to boost your marks in American History, dated 1924!

(d) the organization of the library is unsatisfactory and is normally in the hands of an already overworked teacher usually not qualified for library work.

(e) very few schools have purpose built libraries and their equipment and furniture is unsuitable for library use.

(f) the school library is not well used and if anything at all, it is used as a study area especially for senior pupils.

These are some of the problems facing the Tanganyika Library Service in its effort to improve the status of

libraries in over 100 secondary schools. However it must be pointed out that for lack of funds and manpower the present library programme does not include over 5,000 primary schools now in existence.

Though the job appears to be formidable the Tanganyika Library Service is not discouraged in its endeavour to improve school libraries. The objective assessment of the problems facing school libraries should, if anything at all, guide TLS as to what strategy should be taken in its library programme to make sure that eventually every school library in Tanzania - God knows when - will indeed be a basic tool for teaching. After all isn't there a Chinese proverb which says that a journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step?

References:

1. Project agreement between the Agency for International Development (AID) as an agency for the government of the United States of America and the Government of Tanganyika p.2.

2. Frost, E. Establishment of model school library (cyclostyled doc.) 5p.

3. Frost, E. "School Libraries in Tanzania" Unesco Bull. Libr. Vol. XXIII No. 6 Nov-Dec 1969 pp. 300-309; 325